

HAMNET BULLETIN FOR SUNDAY 1 February 2004

HAMNET is the Official Emergency Communications network of the South African Radio League and provides emergency communication to local, regional and national authorities, when requested to do so.

THIS BULLETIN WAS COMPILED AND PREPARED BY FRANCOIS BOTHA ZS6BUU.

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SILENT KEY

It is with regret and great sadness that we have to report the passing of Hugo Beyers, ZS6OH in Barberton on Saturday the 24th of January.

To many, the name may be unknown, but I took over as National Director of HAMNET from Hugo in the late 80 s or early 90 s, I just cannot remember the exact date.

Hugo became an amateur radio operator on the 30th of October 1946 and was for many years a long-standing member of the SARL. He was also involved in many Branches and served on many a committee.

When I became involved in HAMNET, Geoff Tinker was at the helm but after Geoff, Hugo took over and when he retired, I took over as National Director for a few years before that eventually went to Jan Schubart.

To his wife Frances, children, grand children family and many friends, our sincere condolences. The funeral took place in Barberton on Friday the 30th of January.

1. HAMNET BULLETINS AROUND THE COUNTRY

KZN Sunday morning at 07H00 on their local VHF repeaters with a relay on 7.070MHz

National Bulletin at 17H00 local on 145,700MHz, 10,130Mhz in the 30M band with a relay on 7.070Mhz in the 40M band.

The Gauteng North bulletin will follow immediately after the National Bulletin on 145,725MHz in the Pretoria area on Sundays.

North West Province have a club bulletin on Mondays, which includes a Hamnet segment at 19H00 local on 3,750Mhz in the 80M band as well as their local repeater on 145.737.5Mhz.

Hamnet Western Cape Province with a bulletin on Wednesdays at 20H30 local on 145:700MHz, relayed on 3,674MHz.

The HAMNET Bulletin is sent to all those of whom I have an e-mail address and also sent out on packet by Rudi, ZS6DX.

2. SEARCH & RESCUE EXERCISE

The office of South African Search & Rescue has advised us that an exercise will take place in the Georges Valley area in Tzaneen between 12 and 14 February this month. The exercise will begin late on Thursday afternoon the 12th and will be completed before lunch on Saturday the 14th.

HAMNET have, at rather short notice, been invited to participate.

This immediately creates a problem, as we do not have many active members in the Limpopo Province. Other organisations that have been asked to participate are the Off Road Rescue Unit, the Mountain Club of South Africa, Disaster Management of the area, SANDF Commandos, EMS, SAAF Letaba Flying Club etc. Between the Mountain Club and Off Road Rescue Unit there are some Amateur Radio operators with whom a combined meeting will take place shortly to make final plans.

However, I do ask any other Amateur Radio Operators in the Pietersburg (Polokwane), Tzaneen, area who would like to participate, to please let me know as soon as possible.

If there are HAMNET members locally who are capable and prepared to travel up to Tzaneen for this exercise, please also let me know as soon as possible of your availability. This excludes any Off Road and or Mountain Club members.

A meeting will take place next week, by the various parties concerned in Johannesburg, to make final plans for this exercise. As soon as this meeting has taken place, you will be advised of the outcome and our level of participation.

My telephone/fax number is 011 679-5260. My Cell number is 083 585 3847.

3. LOCAL & INTERNATIONAL DISASTERS

Not much to report here. There were mudslides again in the Philippines and a volcano making some worrying noises in Indonesia. The mudslides are caused by deforestation and with the annual heavy rainy season, and no vegetation to contain the water; the end result is most often disastrous.

We have also had some e-mail information from Ken Groom in Holland, Michigan of severe winter conditions in the north and north-eastern parts of the USA.

Locally, the holiday season is over but official road accident figures have still not been released. My assumption is that they will probably be much the same as the year before. The major concern is still all the un-roadworthy vehicles that are being allowed to proceed on their way after payment of the odd bribe or two. This is a compounding problem, which eventually will spiral out of control.

DISASTER COMMUNICATION CALL SIGN S

Up to a few years ago, specific call signs were in use to recognise that a frequency is currently in use for either an emergency or an exercise. These call signs had the suffix DCC - Disaster Control Centre.

These licences were paid by the SARL but with budget constraints, these call signs were not renewed and fell away.

However, It has now been mooted by at least one of the Provinces/Regions, that these call signs be re-introduced. HAMNET KZN have indicated that they are prepared to bear the cost of the annual license fee for the privilege of having such a call sign made available to them for emergency purposes and identification.

I would like to hear from the other Provincial Directors and their teams if they are prepared to bear the cost of and the benefit of making use of a call sign with a specific ZS?DCC to an allocated region.

Please respond as soon as possible so I can put this forward at the next Council meeting which will take place in February 2004.

NEW E-MAIL ADDRESS

Please take note of the new E-mail address allocated to me with immediate effect. The old e-mail address is no longer valid as the Domain no longer exists with the sale of my business.

My new e-mail address is zs6buu@uskonet.com

Please make the necessary changes to your databases.

DATES TO DIARISE

The weekend of 14 & 15 February is one to consider for some alternative amateur activities. Firstly on Saturday morning from 9 to about 11am it s the Kid s Day whereby we could not only introduce children to amateur radio but also it usefulness in providing alternative communication in times of emergency.

Secondly, and after the Tzaneen exercise, for those who still have the energy, there is the SARL Field Day.

Final comment; on Sundays the weather net will follow immediately after the completion of the Hamnet network in order to free-up the rest of the evening.

Have fun, and enjoy your hobby.

Bulletin ends.